

Dave Dwyer

February 23, 2017

Appropriations - DDS cuts

Thank you to the co-chairs, Senator Osten, Senator Formica, and Representative Walker, and esteemed members of the Appropriations Committee.

My name is Dave Dwyer, and I currently work at Southbury Training School. I am testifying today to urge the committee to reject the \$25 million in cuts that the Governor has proposed to DDS. However, I support the fact that the Governor's budget touches on the need to establish innovative programs which address the waiting list.

I'm here today to urge you to fund an innovative program DDS already began several years ago. I, along with 38 coworkers, successfully completed the DDS Training Academy for Family Support in 2014. This Academy was the result of an agreement between the State and District 1199 following the recommendation of the joint labor management Education and training Committee.

The purpose of this DDS pilot program was to provide training to STS workers to enhance our skills so we could then successfully work with individuals supported by DDS in their homes and/or with their families.

The project was successful in training DDS employees to provide Individual Family Support services. Unfortunately, it was less successful in deploying these workers- only three are currently providing IFS services. We are all ready and anxious to provide services to those who need them in the community.

We urge you to finish this pilot project. We can begin this work in our communities once you include us in the IFS budget.

Thank you.